

CDF NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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CDF Says It is Time for Your Tree's Spring Check Up

Sacramento - Health professionals recommend that you have a medical check up at least once a year. Likewise, trees are living organisms that require regular health maintenance. Proper tree care is an investment that can lead to substantial returns. Well-maintained trees are attractive and can add considerable value to property, where poorly maintained trees can be a substantial liability. And especially important this summer, a home shaded by healthy trees will be much more **energy efficient**.

So that you can get the most benefit from your urban forest, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) recommends contacting a professional arborist to give your trees a complete checkup.

An arborist is a specialist in the care of individual trees. Just like a doctor, an arborist is the person most qualified and knowledgeable to assess the health of your trees. Arborists provide a variety of services that include:

Pruning - An arborist can determine what type of pruning is necessary to maintain or improve the health, appearance and safety of your trees.

Emergency Tree Care - Storms may cause damage to limbs. A professional arborist is trained to recognize potential hazards that may not be visible to the homeowner.

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Planting - Arborists can recommend what types of trees are appropriate for different conditions. They assess soil types and sun conditions, so homeowners can select trees that will do best in a particular landscape.

Removal - Always a last resort, tree removal is necessary under some circumstances. Arborists can best advise homeowners about these situations.

Other Services - Arborists, like doctors, can provide specialty services, including diagnosis, insect control and treatment of various diseases. Arborists are also specialists in fertilization, aeration, cabling, bracing and the installation of lightning protection systems.

Selecting an Arborist- To ensure the highest quality service for your trees, exercise some of the same precautions in selecting an arborist as in choosing a doctor.

- Ask for more than one reference. Why allow someone to perform unnecessary surgery on your landscape without being certain it is the best course of action?
- Be wary of individuals who go door-to-door and offer bargains for performing tree care. Qualified arborists are generally too busy to solicit business in this manner.
- Don't always accept the lowest bid. Quality workmanship may be slightly more expensive, but in the long run can save money. Poor workmanship leads to complications that can damage trees, potentially costing homeowners more overtime.
- Ask for proof of insurance for both personal and property damage as well as workers' compensation.
- Look for professional credentials. Arborists should be members of the International Society of Arboricultural (ISA), National Arborist Association (NAA), or the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA). Similar to diplomas in a doctor's office, these professional credentials represent the highest standards of tree care excellence. Your local ISA chapter can give you the names of certified arborists near you.

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